

The Slave Girl and Prison

Acts 16: 19-40

3 great conversions:

1. Merchant
2. Slave girl
3. Jailer

Acts 16:19 When Satan attacks he uses

1. Alliance—Demon-possessed girl.
2. Antagonism—Hostile men “**caught Paul and Silas.**”

Two times Gentiles wage attack on church (Ephesus and Philippi). Motivation. Money!

Marketplace: town square where crowds gather (Acts 17:17; Mark 7:4; Mark 6:56).

Rulers: magistrates, commanders, chiefs. 2 Praetors.

Why not arrest Luke and Timothy? They were Gentiles

Roman allow people to believe anything wanted. Not allowed to propagate beliefs

Acts 16:20 **Magistrate:** military leaders with civil and military responsibilities.

Any riot would a reflection on them and their leadership.

Exceedingly trouble: disturb wholly, agitate,

They forgot their pocket books and become interested in a peaceful city.

Mac: ...*the love of money blurs spiritual perception.* “ 1 Timothy 6:9-11

Acts 16:21 Best way to surface hypocrisy is to expose evil actions.

Common thread--all of a sudden become great law abiding citizens.

Barnes: *People slumber quietly in sin, and pursue their wicked gains; they hate or despise all law and all forms of religion; but the moment their course of life is attacked and exposed, they become full of zeal for laws that they would not themselves hesitate to violate, and for the customs of religion which in their hearts they thoroughly despise. Worldly-minded people often thus complain that their neighborhoods are disturbed by revivals of religion;*

Acts 16:22 **And the multitude rose up together against them: ...**

Shortly before this incident the Emperor Claudius expelled Jews from Rome (18:2).

...and the magistrates rent off their clothes, when a man ordered to be whipped/scourged the policemen/magistrates would violently rip their clothes off

Lectors carried bundle of canes/rods. Bundled together around an axe-symbolic of rights of Roman magistrate to mete out corporal punishment any time wished. Axe symbol of right he had to give judgment of death

Acts 16:23 Severely beaten

- Jews—40 stripes minus 1
- Romans—keep going until the Praetors gave word to stop.

Acts 16:24 Levels in prisons:

1. Communiore—prisoners had light and air
2. Interiora—strong iron gate, bars, locks
3. Tullianum (dungeon)—death row; dangerous criminals.

Inner prison: Maximum security ward. Feet placed in stocks and stocks locked

and made their feet fast in the stocks. Cause great pain in legs. Horrendous cramping.

Jailer knew that if prisoner escaped--his life at risk.

Acts 16:25 Why praying and singing praises to God?

Adam Clarke: *They were so fully satisfied that they were right, and had done their duty, that there was no room for regret or self-reproach. At the same times they had such consolations from God as could render any circumstances not only tolerable, but delightful. They prayed, first, for grace to support them, and for pardon and salvation for their persecutors; and then, secondly, sang praises to God, who had called them to such a state of salvation, and had accounted them worthy to suffer shame for the testimony of Jesus. And, although they were in the inner prison, they sang so loud and so heartily that the prisoners heard them.*

Mac: *Paul and Silas did not base their theology on their circumstances. Instead, they evaluated those circumstances in light of what they knew to be true about God*

Payer and praise are not dependent upon circumstances.

Phil 4:4 1 Thess. 5:16-18 Rom 8:28 2 Cor. 4:15-18 2 Cor. 12:8-10 Phil 4:6-7 Mat 6:25-34. John 14:27 John 16:33

Spurgeon: *The nightingale singeth most sweetly because she singeth in the night. If she sang by day she might be thought to sing no more sweetly than the wren. A Christian's song in trouble is specially sweet.*

Psa 6:9 Psa 30: Psa 142:1 Acts 1:14 Eph 6:18

God wants us to learn to go through various trials and crisis situations with an attitude of thanksgiving and prayer. Psa 26:6-7 Psa 30:4 Psa 92:1 Psa 95:2 Psa 100:4 Psa 140:13

25 And at midnight ... long period of time

Prisoners heard them. New experience for prisoners...attractive entertainment

The jail didn't cause Paul and Silas to pray and praise. It simply surfaced prayer and praise!

Acts 16:26 Suddenly: unexpectedly, without any warning.

The foundations of the prison were shaken: the substructure of the prison began to move back and forth...to waver.

All the doors were opened—every entrance into the prison was thrust open.

And everyone's bands were loosed: Everyone's chains dropped to the ground.

Acts 16:27 Earthquake woke him up. Would rather take own life than to die in shame and infamy.

Now, just as he is ready to commit suicide Paul cries out with a loud voice.

Acts 16:28-29 Called for a light:

- Protection.
- Documentation.

Why immediate response?

- Had heard message from Paul and Silas
- Had observed their life message
- God's power demonstrated
- God created a need.

Sprang in: ran in...jumped in...leaped in

Trembling: terrified.

And fell down before Paul and Silas: prostrate... on face

Acts 16:30 Sirs: *kurios*—master, authorities, Term of respect.

What must I do to be saved?